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**Happy Days with the
Naked Chef**

Jamie Oliver

with photographs by David Loftus

 **HYPERION**

NEW YORK

Chilli con Carne

It's great to buy chuck steak for this recipe because you know exactly what quality of meat you're buying. Then simply cut it into pieces and pulse in a food processor until it resembles ground beef. I normally make double the amount of chilli needed so that I can divide the extra into sandwich bags, knotted at the top, for freezing. These bags can then be boiled for 15 minutes when needed.

SERVES 4

**2 medium onions • 1 clove of garlic • olive oil • 2 level
teaspoons chilli powder • 1 fresh red chilli, deseeded and finely
chopped • 1 heaping teaspoon ground cumin (or crushed
cumin seeds) • sea salt and freshly ground black pepper • 1lb
chuck steak, minced, or best ground beef • 7oz sun-dried
tomatoes, in oil • 2 14oz cans of tomatoes • ½ a stick of
cinnamon • 2 14oz cans of red kidney beans, drained**

To cook this I use a metal pan or casserole with a lid, which you can use on the stovetop and in the oven. If you are going to use the oven method (see below), then preheat the oven to 300°F. Blitz the onions and garlic in a food processor until finely chopped, then fry in a little olive oil until soft. Add the chilli powder, fresh chilli, cumin and a little seasoning. Then add the minced chuck steak or beef and continue to cook, stirring, until it has browned. Blitz the sun-dried tomatoes in the food processor with enough oil from the jar to loosen into a paste. Add these to the beef with the tomatoes, cinnamon stick and a wineglass of water. Season a little more if need be.

Bring to the boil, cover with wax paper and the lid, then either turn the heat down to simmer and cook for 1½ hours or transfer the pan to the oven for about 1½ hours. Add the kidney beans 30 minutes before the end of the cooking time—they are already cooked and only need warming up.

This always tastes better if you cook it the day before (to give the flavors time to develop), so it's really handy if you've got friends coming round and don't want to be stuck in the kitchen. Just take it out of the fridge and warm it up—serve it with lots of fresh crusty bread, a nice tossed salad, and a big blob of plain yogurt or guacamole.

Pancakes U.S.A. Style

These American pancakes are great! Instead of being thin and silky like French crêpes, they are wonderfully fluffy and thick and can be made to perfection straight away. Simple, simple, simple—my Jools goes mad for them!

SERVES 2-4

**3 large eggs • scant 1 cup all-purpose flour • 1 heaping
teaspoon baking powder • ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons milk •
a pinch of salt**

First separate the eggs, putting the whites into one bowl and the yolks into another. Add the flour, baking powder and milk to the yolks and mix to a smooth thick batter. Whisk the whites with the salt until they form stiff peaks. Fold into the batter—it is now ready to use.

Heat a good nonstick pan on a medium heat. Pour some of your batter into the pan and fry for a couple of minutes until it starts to look golden and firm. At this point sprinkle your chosen flavoring (see below) on to the uncooked side before loosening with a spatula and flipping the pancake over. Continue frying until both sides are golden.

You can make these pancakes large or small, to your liking. You can serve them simply doused in maple syrup and even with some butter or crème fraîche. Or if you choose to sprinkle with a flavoring, try one of these ...

fresh corn from the cob • crispy bacon or pancetta • blueberries •
banana • stewed apple • grated chocolate
• anything else you can imagine ...

Chicken Breast Baked in a Bag with Mushrooms, Butter, White Wine and Thyme

SERVES 2

**2 7oz skinless chicken breasts • 1 handful of dried porcini •
9oz mixed mushrooms, torn up • 1 large wineglass of white
wine • 3 large pats of butter • 1 handful of fresh thyme • 2
cloves of garlic, peeled and sliced**

As this is for 2 people, I'm going to make a large envelope/bag to cook everything in. Using wide aluminum foil, make your bag by placing 2 pieces on top of each other (about as big as 2 shoeboxes in length), folding 3 sides in and leaving 1 side open.

Preheat the oven to 425°F. Mix everything together in a bowl, including the chicken. Place in your bag, with all the wine, making sure you don't pierce the foil. Close up the final edge, making sure the bag is tightly sealed and secure on all sides, and carefully slide it onto a roasting pan. Place the pan on a high heat for 1 minute to get the heat going, then bake in the middle of your preheated oven for 25 minutes.

Remove from the oven, place the bag on a big plate, take it to the table and break open the foil. Feel free to vary the recipe—things like grated parsnip, smoked bacon and red wine also work well.

Chicken Breast Baked in a Bag with Cannellini Beans, Leeks, Cream and Marjoram

SERVES 2

about 10 baby leeks, trimmed and washed • 2 7oz skinless
chicken breasts • 1 14oz can of cannellini beans, drained and
washed • 1 clove of garlic, peeled and sliced • 1 small handful
of fresh marjoram or oregano, leaves picked • 1 small
wineglass of white wine • ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons heavy
cream • sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

As this is for 2 people, I'm going to make a large envelope/bag to cook everything in. Using wide aluminum foil, make your bag by placing 2 pieces on top of each other (about as big as 2 shoeboxes in length), folding 3 sides in and leaving 1 side open.

Preheat the oven to 425°F. Put the leeks into a pan and cook in boiling water for 2 minutes, just to soften. Drain and mix in a bowl with all the other ingredients, including the chicken, mashing a handful of the cannellini beans to a pulp in your hands. Season well, then place in your bag with all the creamy sauce, making sure you don't pierce the foil. Close up the final edge, making sure the bag is tightly sealed and secure on all sides, and carefully slide it onto a roasting pan. Place the pan on a high heat for 1 minute to get the heat going, then bake in the middle of your preheated oven for 25 minutes.

Remove from the oven, place the bag on a big plate, take it to the table and break open the foil. Feel free to vary the recipe—things like cooked new potatoes, a tablespoon of wholegrain mustard or a couple of handfuls of raw spinach are all good.

Baked Cod with Avocado, Shrimp, Cream and Cheese

SERVES 2

extra virgin olive oil • sea salt and freshly ground black pepper • 2 8oz cod fillets, skinned and pin-boned •
1 small handful of fresh basil, ripped • 1 avocado, peeled, pitted, halved and sliced • 5½oz good peeled shrimp, cooked or uncooked • ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons heavy cream •
5½oz good Cheddar cheese

Preheat the oven to 425°F. Rub a baking dish or roasting pan with a little olive oil, season the cod on both sides and place in the dish. Sprinkle the fillets with the basil, avocado and shrimp. Drizzle over the cream and grate over the cheese. Cook at the top of the preheated oven for 15–20 minutes until golden brown and bubbling. Season to taste with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper and serve simply with a green salad. Lovely jubbly.

Roasted Cod with Cherry Tomatoes, Basil and Mozzarella

SERVES 2

2 8oz cod fillets, skinned and pin-boned • olive oil • sea salt
and freshly ground black pepper • 2 handfuls
of red and yellow cherry tomatoes, halved • 1 handful of fresh
basil, leaves picked • 1 ball of buffalo mozzarella, finely
sliced • 1 handful of grated Parmesan cheese

Preheat the oven to 425°F. Place the cod fillets in an oiled roasting pan or an earthenware dish. Drizzle with olive oil and season. Place the tomatoes, basil and mozzarella on top of the fillets. Sprinkle over the Parmesan, drizzle over some olive oil, and bake at the top of the preheated oven for about 15–20 minutes, until golden.

Frozen Yogurt

This is almost like ice cream, can be any flavor you like, and is really tasty and refreshing, but more important, it's so, so quick to make because you don't have to do any whipping or freezing. Just a bit of help from your trusty food processor and some frozen fruit.

SERVES 4-6

**11oz good frozen fruit (strawberries, raspberries,
blueberries, etc.) • 1lb 2oz tub of yogurt • 2 tablespoons
good honey • optional: sugar cones or wafers**

The only important thing to remember here is that your fruit should be in the freezer and frozen and your yogurt in the fridge and cold before you start. Remove the fruit and place it in your food processor. Blitz for 30 seconds, add the yogurt and honey and blend for a minute until smooth. At this point, taste for sweetness—fruit is normally frozen when it's ripe and at its best, so it should be pretty perfect. If not, add some more honey. It should be scoopable, so eat it straight away or put it into a covered bowl and place in the freezer, where it will keep for a couple of weeks. How good is that?

Japanese Cucumber Salad with Ginger, Cilantro, Mint and Rice Wine Vinegar Dressing

SERVES 4

In our supermarkets we have been blessed with a new type of cucumber that is about a third of the size of normal cucumbers. I really like them because they are a touch firmer and ideal for this oriental salad. Wash 3 cucumbers and finely slice along their length with a mandolin or one of those cheap old potato peelers. Basically you want to get very fine strips of cucumber. Place the strips on a plate and spread them out. Sprinkle with some ripped-up fresh mint and cilantro and drizzle generously with the ginger and rice wine vinegar dressing (page 115).



The Best Pasta Salad

SERVES 4

11oz small shell-shaped pasta • 3 cloves of garlic
• ½ pint yellow cherry tomatoes • ½ pint red
cherry tomatoes • 1 handful of black olives, pitted •
2 tablespoons fresh chives • 1 handful of fresh basil •
½ a cucumber • 4 tablespoons white wine vinegar, or to
taste • 7 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil • sea salt
and freshly ground black pepper

Bring a large pan of salted water to the boil. Throw in the pasta and cloves of garlic, boil until al dente, drain and run under cold water to cool. Put the garlic to one side to use for the dressing. Put the pasta into a bowl. Chop the tomatoes, olives, chives, basil and cucumber into pieces about half the size of the pasta and add to the bowl. Squash the garlic cloves out of their skins and mush in a mortar and pestle. Add the vinegar, oil and seasoning. Drizzle this over the salad, adding a little more seasoning to taste.

Spaghetti with Sweet Cherry Tomatoes, Marjoram and Extra Virgin Olive Oil

When tomatoes are good, this is super nice. It's a warm dish as opposed to hot, and it is even great when cold as a salad for picnics.

SERVES 4

**1lb dried spaghetti, spaghettini or linguine •
11–14oz ripe cherry tomatoes, red and yellow •
2 good handfuls of fresh marjoram or basil, leaves
picked • 6–8 glugs extra virgin olive oil • 1 clove of garlic,
peeled and finely sliced • 1 tablespoon white or red wine
vinegar • sea salt and freshly ground black pepper**

Put your pasta into a large pot of salted boiling water and cook until al dente (check the package for cooking time). While it's cooking, halve the tomatoes, put them into a large bowl, and add your herbs, olive oil, garlic and vinegar. Season to taste, and scrunch with your hands to slightly mush the tomatoes. This can sit now until the pasta's ready. Drain the pasta, and while still steaming hot mix well with the tomatoes, check the seasoning and serve. Easy peasy.

Spaghetti with Salami, Fennel and Tomatoes

SERVES 4

extra virgin olive oil • 5oz good spicy Italian salami,
sliced • 2 cloves of garlic, peeled and finely sliced •
1 teaspoon fennel seeds • 1 bulb of fennel, halved and
finely sliced, feathery tops reserved and chopped • 2 14oz
cans of plum tomatoes • optional: 1 dried chilli, crumbled •
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper • 1lb dried spaghetti
or linguine • 2 handfuls of stale bread crumbs • optional:
a sprig of fresh rosemary

Pour 2 good glugs of olive oil into a pan. Add your salami and your sliced garlic. Lightly crack the fennel seeds either in a mortar and pestle or with a knife and add to the pan. Cook for 1 minute on a low heat—the fat should cook out of the salami and it should begin to get crisp. Add your sliced fennel and stir, then put the lid on the pan and increase the heat to medium. Cook for 5 minutes, then add your tomatoes and even a little dried chilli if you like. Cook slowly for 25 minutes until the mixture has thickened. Season to taste.

Cook your pasta in a large pot of fast-boiling salted water until al dente (check the package for cooking time). While it's cooking I like to make pangritata (crunchy breadcrumbs), to give this dish a great texture and crunch. Just get a couple of good handfuls of coarse bread crumbs—I do this by removing the crusts from some stale bread and whizzing them up in a food processor until kind of coarse. Fry the crumbs with 4 or 5 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil until they go crispy. Sometimes I throw in some rosemary sprigs as well to give extra flavor. When your pasta is cooked, drain it in a colander and immediately toss it with your lovely tomato sauce. This is quite rich but very very tasty.

Serve in a large bowl and sprinkle with the green fennel tops and your crispy golden pangritata. Eat immediately, with a good glass of red wine.

Kinda Spaghetti Bolognaise

As far as I know, no decent Italian cook has any real recollection of what we know as Spaghetti Bolognaise. However, every region in Italy makes its own ragú sauce that very often features leftover stewed meats and game. For a great bolognaise it's worth whizzing up some chopped chuck steak to make your own minced meat. Here's my version.

SERVES 4

10 slices of pancetta or bacon • 1 handful of rosemary, leaves
picked and roughly chopped • olive oil • 1 large onion, finely
chopped • 3 cloves of garlic, finely chopped • 1lb best chuck
steak, minced or ground beef • 1 wineglass of red wine •
1 level teaspoon dried oregano • 1 14oz can of tomatoes •
1 7oz tube tomato purée or 1 small jar of sun-dried tomatoes,
finely chopped • sea salt and freshly ground black pepper •
1lb dried spaghetti • 1 handful of fresh basil •
2 handfuls of grated Parmesan or sharp Cheddar cheese

Preheat the oven to 350°F. In a large hot pan that can go in the oven, fry the pancetta and rosemary in a little olive oil until lightly golden. Then add the onion and garlic and fry for a further 3 minutes, until softened, before adding the ground beef. Stir and continue frying for 2 or 3 minutes before adding the wine. Reduce slightly, then add the oregano, all the tomatoes, and the tomato purée. Season well to taste, bring to the boil, cover with wax paper or a lid, and place in the preheated oven for an hour and a half. Toward the end of the cooking time, put your spaghetti into a large pot of fast-boiling salted water until al dente (check the package for cooking time). When it's cooked, drain it in a colander.

Just before serving, add some ripped-up fresh basil to the sauce. Serve with your spaghetti and some grated Parmesan or sharp Cheddar. A green salad is also nice with this.

Open Lasagne of Sweet Tomatoes, Squid, Mussels, Farro and Olives

This dish is a real joy, inspired by a great American chef called Mario Batali who made me a simple squid stew on one of my trips to America. He called it "two-minute squid" and it has stayed in my memory ever since. I've changed it slightly so that it is now a pukka pasta dish, but it can be thinned slightly with a little stock to make a great soup, or you can use it as a sauce over some grilled fish. Tossed with lasagne, like this, or with some tagliatelle, it's brilliant. Farro is a grain, similar to couscous or bulgur wheat, that has a great nutty flavor.

SERVES 6

**1 red onion, finely chopped • 2 cloves of garlic, finely
sliced • 2oz farro or couscous • 2 handfuls of black olives,
pits left in • 2 14oz cans of tomatoes • 14oz mussels, cleaned
• 14oz clams, cleaned • 11oz squid, cleaned, trimmed and
sliced • 12 sheets of fresh lasagne • sea salt and freshly
ground black pepper • 1 handful of fresh parsley, chopped •
extra virgin olive oil**

In a large pot, slowly fry the onion and garlic in a little olive oil for 1 minute, then add the farro, olives and tomatoes and simmer for 30 minutes. Add the mussels and clams to the pot and shake around until they all open up (discard any that remain closed). Then add the squid and simmer for 1 minute. Remove the meat from most of the shells, then put your pasta on to cook until al dente in boiling salted water (check the package for cooking time). Season the sauce carefully, throw in the parsley, and add 5 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil to give it a good shine. When the pasta is cooked, toss with the sauce and serve immediately.

Whole Roasted Salmon Wrapped in Herbs and Newspaper

This recipe is absolutely great for parties. It's a fantastic way of cooking pretty much any whole fish, particularly salmon and trout. It's best cooked on a camp fire, over a barbecue or in a wood oven, as the paper will begin to burn, giving you a fantastic subtle smoked flavor. You will still get great results from cooking in a conventional oven but the newspaper will not blacken as on a camp fire. This recipe varies very little, depending on the number of people that you want to serve—for more than 6, just use a bigger salmon, more herbs, more paper and a slightly longer cooking time.

SERVES 6

1 3½lb whole salmon, scaled and gutted • sea salt
and freshly ground black pepper • olive oil • 4 large
bunches of mixed fresh herbs (parsley, fennel tops, basil) •
1 copy of *The Times* (or your regular paper!) • 2 lemons,
thick sliced • 4 spring onions, thinly sliced • 2 tablespoons
fennel seeds, cracked

Take your nice fresh salmon, season inside and out, rub with olive oil and stuff with all the herbs. Open your paper out to the middle page and place your salmon in the center. Scatter over your lemons, spring onions, fennel seeds and remaining herbs. Put some of these underneath and over the salmon. Drizzle with a little extra olive oil, tuck in the sides of the paper and fold to wrap up tightly, securing it well with bits of string. Wet the paper really well under the tap and either place directly on a shelf at the top of your oven, preheated to 425°F, for 35 minutes, or preferably cook on your barbie or on a rack over a campfire for about 25 minutes on each side, depending on the intensity of the heat.

Salmon is a great fish for this recipe because it's quite fatty, so whether it's still a bit pink or slightly overdone it's still very acceptable. I like it slightly pink, served with garlic baked potatoes, green salad and homemade mayonnaise—fantastic.

Sicilian Roasted Brill Steak with Lemon, Anchovies, Capers and Rosemary

This is a fantastic way to eat meaty white fish like brill, turbot and halibut. It's really special if they are cut through the bone into steaks—a nice fillet will do as well. Ask your fishmonger to cut you the steaks. You can get hold of Sicilian lemons in some supermarkets now, or use any lemons.

SERVES 4

- 1 handful of fresh rosemary, leaves picked • extra virgin olive oil**
- 4 7oz brill, turbot or halibut steaks • sea salt and freshly ground black pepper • 2 large unwaxed lemons, finely sliced •**
- 1 large handful of salted capers, soaked • 8 good anchovy fillets**
- a splash of white wine or Prosecco**

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Bruise your rosemary in a mortar and pestle to bring out the flavor. Add 6 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil and scrunch together. Pat half of this flavored oil round the fish, season well and put into an earthenware dish or roasting pan. Lay 4 or 5 thin slices of lemon over each steak (I normally slice these on a mandolin or use a very sharp knife). Sprinkle over your capers, and drape over your anchovies. Drizzle with the remaining flavored oil and bake in the preheated oven for around 15 minutes off the bone or 25 minutes on the bone. Now you could splash a little wine in if you like. Remove from the oven and allow to rest, just like a steak, for 5 minutes. Sometimes I like to squeeze a little extra lemon juice over the fish so it can mix with the white creamy cooking juice and olive oil, making an amazing natural sauce. Great served with any steamed greens or a good crispy salad.

Shrimp with Chilli, Parsley, Ginger and Garlic on Toast

This is a really quick dinner that always hits the spot. Nice to do as a starter as well. Just put some finger bowls on the table and let your mates dive in. I always put a little extra chilli in and make sure I've got some nice cold wine on the go as well.

SERVES 4

extra virgin olive oil • 1 thumb-sized piece of fresh ginger,
peeled and finely chopped • 2 cloves of garlic, peeled and finely
sliced • 2–3 fresh red chillies, deseeded and finely sliced •
16 large whole raw tiger or other large shrimp, tails left on or
peeled off • 1–2 lemons, to taste • 1 good handful of fresh
flat-leaf parsley, roughly chopped • sea salt and freshly ground
black pepper • 4 long slices of ciabatta bread, toasted

Into a large, hot frying pan put around 4 tablespoons of olive oil, your ginger, garlic, chilli and shrimp. Fry for about 3 minutes, then turn the heat down and squeeze in the juice of 1 lemon. Add the parsley and a couple of glugs of olive oil. Toss over and remove from the heat. You should have a nice juicy sauce—have a taste. It may need a little more lemon juice. Season to taste. Serve over your ciabatta, to mop up the juices.

Roasted Red Mullet Stuffed with Bread Crumbs, Sun-dried Tomatoes, Olives, Pine Nuts and Marjoram

A lovely way of livening up what is really a simple piece of roasted fish. It might be worth cooking an extra fish so that the next day you can remove it from the bone, tear it up, toss it with some green leaves, oil and lemon and serve on some toasted bruschetta. A nice little starter.

SERVES 4

**½ a ciabatta loaf • 1 large handful of sun-dried tomatoes,
chopped • 1 large handful of olives, pitted and
chopped • 1 large handful of pine nuts • 1 handful of fresh
marjoram or basil, leaves picked • olive oil • sea salt
and freshly ground black pepper • 4 8oz whole red mullet,
scaled, gutted and scored**

Preheat your oven to 400°F. Remove the crusts from your ciabatta and either whizz the bread up in a food processor until you have small but coarse bread crumbs, or use a knife to chop the bread finely. Put the bread into a bowl with the sun-dried tomatoes, olives, pine nuts and marjoram and mix together, loosening with a couple of glugs of olive oil.

Season the fish inside and out and place on an oiled baking tray or pan. Stuff the insides with the bread mixture, pushing some into the scored slits and sprinkling any extra around the fish. Roast at the top of the oven for around 20 minutes until the fish is cooked. Serve, ideally, with a crisp green salad—I normally sprinkle the excess bread crumbs over the salad as well (how orgasmic is that?!).

Flour and Water Crust Chicken

This is a great dish to serve up to friends—they'll wonder if you've gone a bit mad when you produce what looks like a huge lump of pastry and put it in the middle of the table! It's a great way to cook chicken—the meat steams inside the pastry crust and becomes incredibly tender. I've used nice small spring chickens, or poussins, in this recipe but it's just as easy to use Cornish game hens or one 4½lb bird and roast it for 2 hours instead. P.S. You don't eat the pastry!

SERVES 4

2lb all-purpose flour • 2 fat lemons • 2 handfuls of fresh sage,
leaves picked • 1 handful of fresh thyme, leaves picked •
8 cloves of garlic • 8 tablespoons olive oil • sea salt and
freshly ground black pepper • 4 spring chickens
(about 1–1½lb each)

Put your flour into a large bowl, and mix in around 2 cups of water, bit by bit, until you have a dough that is pliable and elastic and not too sticky. Cover and put to one side while you prepare the chickens.

Using a peeler, remove the peel from 1 of the lemons and bash up with the sage, thyme and garlic in a mortar and pestle, or use a metal bowl and a rolling pin. Add your olive oil and plenty of seasoning. This flavorful marinade is great with just about all kinds of meat. Roll up your sleeves and rub the marinade all over the chickens as well as inside the cavity. Slice the remaining lemon and stick a slice or two inside the cavity of each chicken.

Preheat the oven to 425°F. Get your dough mix, divide it into 4 pieces, and roll each one out to about ¼ inch thick. Now mold a piece of dough around each of the chickens so that you have 4 airtight parcels. Leave for 5 minutes, then bake in the preheated oven for an hour. The crust will harden during cooking, steaming and protecting the chicken while keeping all the lovely juices inside, which will give you a fantastic homemade gravy.

Let the chickens rest for 15 minutes after baking, then bring them to the table and, for a bit of drama, crack open each crust in front of your guests. You'll unleash a wicked aroma, steam, the lot, so waft it around a bit. Very impressive stuff. Serve simply with some potatoes and greens.

Pot-roasted Chicken with Sweet and Sour Sauce

This is a fantastic but slightly tacky-sounding roast chicken dish. I have to keep reinventing chicken dishes, as Jools makes me cook chicken every Sunday. It starts to do my head in a bit, but this is one of my latest little winners that always puts a smile on her funny little face.

SERVES 4

1 4½lb chicken, preferably organic • sea salt and freshly ground black pepper • 1 handful of fresh parsley, roughly chopped • 4 thumb-sized pieces of fresh ginger, grated with skin left on • 2 red peppers, halved and deseeded • 2 yellow peppers, halved and deseeded • 4 red onions, peeled • 2 fresh chillies, snapped in half • 1 ripe pineapple, peeled, quartered and chopped • 1 teaspoon fennel seeds, crushed • olive oil • 2 tablespoons sugar • 6 tablespoons balsamic vinegar

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Season your chicken generously inside and out and stuff the cavity with the mixed parsley and ginger. Cut your peppers and red onions into quarters and put them into a cold casserole dish. Add the chillies, pineapple and crushed fennel seeds. Drizzle with 3 good glugs of olive oil, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and toss until well coated. Place your chicken on top, pat it with a little oil and cook in the middle of the preheated oven for 1½ hours. The chicken is ready when the bones can easily be pulled out of the thighs.

Once cooked, drain the chicken juices over the pan. Remove the chicken to a plate with half of the vegetables and pineapple, and allow to rest for 5 minutes while you make your sauce. Put the remaining vegetables and pineapple from the pan into a food processor with the sugar and balsamic vinegar, and correct the seasoning with a little salt. Blend to make a lovely sauce—add a little boiling water to loosen and thin out if need be. You could pass it through a coarse sieve to make it even smoother, but I don't. Season to taste.

To be honest, I can't think of anything better to serve the chicken with than some simple stir-fried noodles or some steamed or boiled rice. Just put the chicken and the veg in the middle of the table and tuck in.

World's Best Baked Onions

I've found it. The best onion recipe—it's smashing, pukka, the absolute dog's kahunas! I love it served with cod but it's also great with roast chicken. You've got to try it.

SERVES 4

4 tennis-ball-sized white onions, peeled • olive oil • 2 cloves of garlic, peeled and finely chopped • 4 twigs of fresh rosemary, lower leaves picked and chopped • 8 tablespoons heavy cream • a couple of handfuls of grated Parmesan cheese • sea salt and freshly ground black pepper • 4 slices of pancetta or bacon

Boil the onions in plenty of water for 15 minutes until slightly tender. Remove from the pan and allow to cool. Then, with a sharp knife, remove the top inch of each onion, finely chop and place to one side. If need be, slightly trim the stalk end of the onions so that they will sit flat on a roasting tray. Cut about a heaping tablespoon out from the inside of each onion, keeping the outside intact. Finely chop and add to the rest of the chopped onion.

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Heat a frying pan and add a little olive oil, your garlic, the chopped onions and just a little chopped rosemary. Fry for a couple of minutes until softened, then turn the heat down, add the cream and remove from the heat. Stir in the Parmesan and season.

I like to wrap a nice slice of pancetta around the middle of each onion and just spike it in place with a sharpened twig of rosemary or wooden toothpick. The rosemary and pancetta will make the onion taste lovely as it cooks. Place the onions on a roasting tray and spoon some of the chopped onion mixture inside each one. Bake in the preheated oven for around 25 minutes until soft and tender, depending on the size of the onions. It's cool to experiment with different cheeses, so give it a bash.

Baked Peppers with Cherry Vine Tomatoes, Basil and Marjoram

SERVES 4

2 peppers, red or yellow • sea salt and freshly ground black pepper • 20 cherry tomatoes • 1 handful of fresh marjoram and basil • 2 cloves of garlic, peeled and sliced • extra virgin olive oil • optional: anchovies • optional: herb vinegar

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Cut the peppers in half and remove the seeds. Place in an oiled baking dish and lightly season with salt and pepper. Prick the cherry tomatoes with a knife and place in boiling water for around 30–60 seconds until the skins can be easily and quickly pinched off. Feel free to run cold water over them before peeling. Once peeled, place the tomatoes in the peppers. Stuff in your herbs and sliced garlic and season. You could drape over some anchovies instead of using seasoning at this point. Drizzle with olive oil. Cook in the preheated oven for 15 minutes lightly covered with aluminum foil, then around 30 minutes without. The smallest little splash of herb vinegar on each pepper can be a real joy—try it and see.

Roasted Fennel with Cherry Tomatoes, Olives, Garlic and Olive Oil

A great little combo that is tasty, fresh and pretty damn healthy. Any leftovers can be chopped and turned into a sexy little pasta dish, maybe with some ricotta and Parmesan cheese added to it. You could even try putting a couple of chicken breasts on top of the fennel and tomatoes before baking in the oven, to make a tasty dinner.

SERVES 6

**2 bulbs of fennel • 24 cherry tomatoes • 1 large
handful of pitted black olives • 1 small handful of fresh thyme,
leaves picked • 2 cloves of garlic, peeled and finely
sliced • sea salt and freshly ground black pepper • extra virgin
olive oil • 1 wineglass of white wine, vermouth
or Pernod • 2 pats of butter**

Remove the top feathery stalks from your fennel and slice them finely. Put them into a roasting pan. Cut your fennel bulbs in quarters, then cut the quarters in half. Put them into boiling, salted water and cook for 10 minutes. While your fennel is cooking, preheat the oven to 425°F and prick all your cherry tomatoes. After 10 minutes remove the fennel with a slotted spoon and add to the roasting pan. Add your tomatoes to the fennel water for 45 seconds, to loosen the skins. Drain them and run a little cold water over them. Pinch or peel the skins away from the tomatoes, then add the tomatoes to the roasting pan. Add the olives, thyme and garlic and season with salt and pepper. Drizzle with 2 glugs of olive oil and mix together. Try to arrange everything neatly so you have one layer. Add your wine and butter, breaking them up over the veg. Bake in the middle of the preheated oven for 30 minutes.

Hamilton Squash

This is a recipe inspired by a one-minute conversation with my mate Johnny Boy Hamilton. He had basically eaten far too much meat in Paris, went for the veggie option one night and was blown away by it. His description used some kind of green rice, but anyway, the great thing is I've given this a bash my way and think it's an absolutely fantastic recipe. So, nice one John. There is no need to precook the rice as it will take on moisture from being cooked inside the squash.

SERVES 4

1 small handful of dried porcini mushrooms • 1 butternut squash, halved and seeds removed • olive oil • 1 red onion, finely chopped • 1 clove of garlic, finely chopped • 1 teaspoon coriander seeds, pounded • a pinch or two of dried chilli, to taste • 2 sprigs of fresh rosemary, leaves picked and finely chopped • 5 sun-dried tomatoes, chopped • sea salt and freshly ground black pepper • 3½oz basmati rice • ½ a handful of pine nuts, lightly roasted

First of all, soak your porcini for 5 minutes in ½ cup of boiling water. Preheat the oven to 450°F. Using a teaspoon, score and scoop out some extra flesh from the length of the squash (see pictures opposite). Finely chop this flesh with the squash seeds and add to a frying pan with 4 glugs of olive oil, the onion, garlic, coriander seeds, chilli, rosemary and sun-dried tomatoes. Fry for 4 minutes until softened. Add the porcini and half their soaking water. Cook for a further 2 minutes before seasoning. Stir in your rice and pine nuts, pack the mixture tightly into the 2 halves of the squash and then press them together. Rub the skin of the squash with a little olive oil, wrap in foil, and bake in the preheated oven for about 1¼ hours.

Cannoli Siciliana

This is a great little dessert that my mate Gennaro Contaldo, the Italian stallion, taught me to make. Cannoli biscuits are filled with lovely sweet ricotta and can be flavored with absolutely anything. They can even be dipped into melted chocolate. You can buy them premade from all good Italian delis and most good supermarkets (if they haven't got them then tell them to order them). They are basically deep-fried, sweetened pasta biscuits that are really light and crispy. These little babies keep well in the cupboard waiting to be turned into a great dessert that takes no time at all.

SERVES 4

**2 pints of raspberries • 6 heaping tablespoons vanilla sugar •
7oz ricotta cheese (buffalo is best) • 3½oz good bittersweet
chocolate, chopped • 1¾oz pistachio nuts, chopped • 1¾oz
glacé fruit, chopped • 12 cannoli biscuits • powdered sugar**

I love to make a raspberry sauce to go with these cannoli biscuits—just throw the raspberries into a small pan with 3 tablespoons of the sugar, bring to the boil, simmer for 1 minute then allow to cool.

Meanwhile, put your ricotta and the remaining 3 tablespoons of sugar into a food processor and blitz for 1 minute until shiny and smooth. If you taste the ricotta now it should be beautifully sweet. Some ricottas need more sugar than others, so taste and adjust to your preference. Scoop it out into a bowl and add your chocolate, pistachios and glacé fruit. Feel free to improvise with flavors here—you can learn only by trying. Put the mixture into a piping bag and pipe all the way through your cannoli biscuits. You can cut a small corner off a plastic or sandwich bag if you haven't got a piping bag. Place 3 biscuits on each plate, drizzled with your raspberry sauce and sprinkled with a little powdered sugar. Lovely.

Fruit Cobbler

This is a fantastic American recipe equivalent to Britain's crumble. Particularly good with strawberries and rhubarb, but you can use any fruit combo you like; about 1½lb of fruit should do it.

SERVES 6

FOR THE FRUIT

2 apricots, pitted and sliced • 1 pear, cored and thickly sliced •
1 pint of blackberries • 1 pint of blueberries • 1 pint of
raspberries • ½ an apple, grated • 5 tablespoons sugar •
a good glug of balsamic vinegar

FOR THE TOPPING

6 heaping tablespoons butter, chilled • generous 1½ cups
self-rising flour • ¼ cup sugar • a large pinch of salt •
½ cup plus 1 tablespoon buttermilk • a little extra sugar
for dusting

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Put the fruit into a pan with the sugar and the balsamic vinegar, put the pan over the heat, and cook gently until the juices begin to run from the berries. Pour into an ovenproof dish.

Meanwhile make the topping. Rub the cold butter into the flour until the mixture resembles fine bread crumbs. Add the sugar and salt, stir well, then add the buttermilk to form a loose biscuit-type dough. Spoon this over the hot fruit (to get a cobbled effect, flick balls of dough randomly over the fruit), sprinkle with a little sugar, and bake in your preheated oven for 30 minutes until golden brown. Serve with vanilla ice cream.

Chocolate Cambridge Cream

Cambridge cream is basically a very similar recipe to crème brûlée. Feel free to double or even triple the recipe if you need to.

SERVES 4

3 vanilla pods • $\frac{3}{4}$ cup plus 2 tablespoons milk • $1\frac{3}{4}$ cup heavy cream • 8 large egg yolks, preferably organic • $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar • 1 heaping teaspoon cocoa powder • $3\frac{1}{2}$ oz good-quality bittersweet chocolate, bashed up finely • extra sugar for caramelizing

Run your knife along the length of the vanilla pods, scraping out the seeds, then chop up the pods. Put the seeds and pods into a thick-bottomed pan with the milk and cream. Simmer slowly for 5 minutes for the flavor to infuse. In a bowl that will fit your pan, whisk the egg yolks, sugar and cocoa powder for a minute. Still slowly whisking, add the vanilla-flavored milk and cream and keep whisking until well mixed. Add 1 inch of hot water to your dirty pan, bring to a simmer, and put your bowl on top of the pan. Cook the custard slowly over the simmering water for 5 minutes, stirring often, until it coats the back of a spoon. Get a pitcher, then push the custard through a fine sieve to remove the vanilla pods. Discard these.

Preheat your oven to 300°F. Put 4 ovenproof serving dishes in a high-sided roasting pan. Divide your chocolate between them and shake flat. Carefully divide your custard mix between your dishes, making sure the chocolate isn't disturbed. Fill the tray with water until it is about halfway up the sides of your dishes. Cook in your preheated oven for around 30–45 minutes until slightly wobbly in the middle. Keep your eyes peeled and don't let the custards cook solid—remember that all ovens cook differently. Allow to cool (you can refrigerate these for up to 3 days if you like, but I like it best on the night at room temperature), then sprinkle with some sugar and caramelize with one of those small blowtorches (or you can boil 6 or 7 tablespoons of sugar with a couple of tablespoons of water until you have golden caramel and carefully pour this over the top if you're stuck).

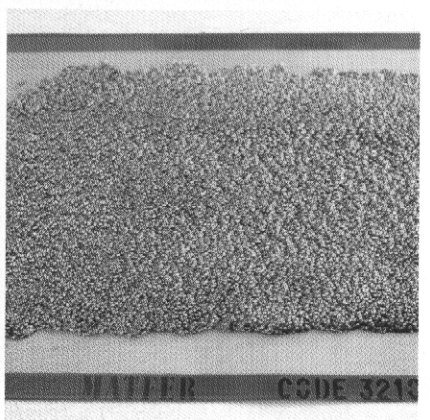
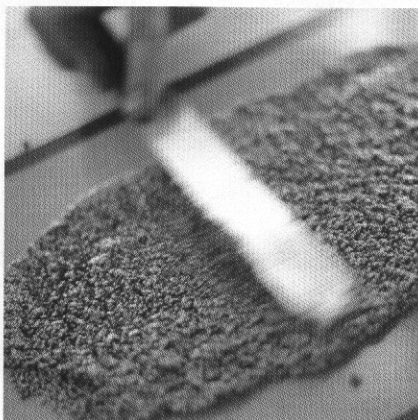
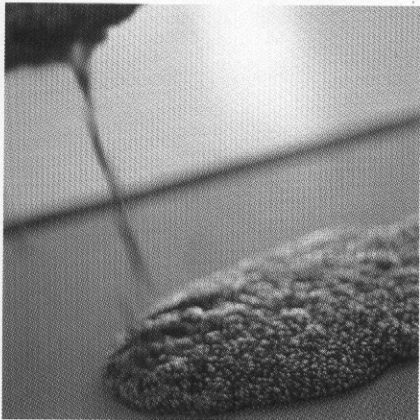
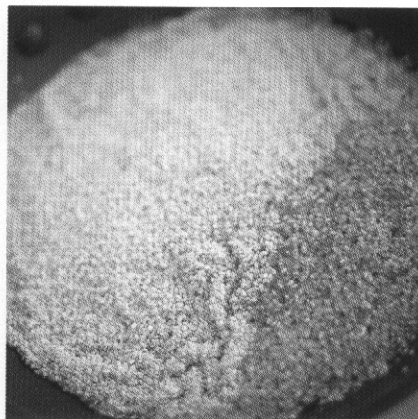
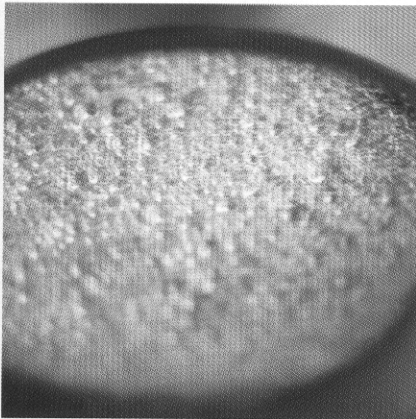
Sesame Seed Toffee Snaps

These are great to mop up the lovely chocolate mousse on page 278. Caramel can cause quite bad burns, so keep your eyes peeled—even though this is a kids' favorite, you don't want to get kids involved in cooking this one.

MAKES ABOUT 12

1lb sugar • 7oz pack of sesame seeds

Put your sugar and 8–10 tablespoons of water into a pan on a medium heat. Use a spoon to stir together—it will become a syrup. Carry on cooking until light golden (but don't stir too much at this stage or sugar crystals will form in your syrup and you don't want this to happen), then add your sesame seeds and continue to cook until dark golden. Pour out your sesame seed caramel onto an oiled nonstick pan. Use a palette knife to push it out to about ¼ inch thick (even thinner if you can). Allow to cool for about 15 minutes and you will have one big sesame seed caramel biscuit. Bash it up as you like.



Chocolate and Whole Orange Pudding

A pudding with a lovely surprise in the center of it when you cut it open. The orange peel is cooked like marmalade and its sharpness goes well with the sweetness of the chocolate.

SERVES 6-8

6 tablespoons butter • 2oz bittersweet chocolate • 1¼ cups
self-rising flour • ⅓ cup cocoa powder • 10 tablespoons sugar
• 2 eggs • 2 tablespoons milk

FOR THE FILLING

1 orange—preferably a thin-skinned navel variety •
6 tablespoons butter • ¼ cup sugar

First, bring some water to the boil in a pan (in which you are later going to steam your pudding), and put in your whole orange to boil fast for at least 10 minutes with the lid on.

Meanwhile, grease a 2 pint pudding basin. Melt the butter with the chocolate in a bowl set over a pan of hot water. Put the flour and cocoa into a mixing bowl; add the melted butter and chocolate, then the sugar, eggs and milk, and mix well. Put about two-thirds of the mixture into the basin, making a well in the middle.

By this time the orange should have been boiling for about 10 minutes, and the peel should be nice and soft. Remove it carefully from the water. Prick the orange all over with a fork or skewer and place it in the middle of the pudding mix. You can (with care, as it's still hot) cut the orange into segments, if you want to check for seeds or cut off the stringy bits of orange in the middle, then put it back together again (it does make it easier for serving), although I don't usually bother.

Dice the butter and dot it round the orange with the sugar, then cover with the remaining pudding mixture. Cover the pudding with wax paper, then with aluminum foil, and place in the pan of boiling water (it should come halfway up the sides of the basin). Steam for 2 hours. Don't forget to check now and then to see if the water needs topping off.

Turn the pudding out onto a serving dish and serve with custard or cream.

Lovely Lemon Curdy Pud

This is really tasty and dead easy to make—my sister Anna loves it! It looks good cooked in a Pyrex dish, as it goes into layers as it cooks, with a sort of lemon curdy custard at the bottom and a spongy meringuey top. Mmmmmmm ... very delicious!

SERVES 4

- ¼ cup butter • ⅓ cup sugar (vanilla sugar is nice) • grated
rind and juice of 1 lemon • 2 large eggs, separated
• 6½ tablespoons self-rising flour • 1¼ cups milk**

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Cream the butter, sugar and lemon rind in a mixing bowl. Add the egg yolks and flour and beat in, then add the milk and 3 tablespoons of lemon juice and mix well.

Whisk the egg whites in a separate bowl until stiff, then add the rest of the mixture. Mix it all well but don't overmix it; you don't want the air to come out of the egg whites. Pour into a buttered ovenproof dish, stand the dish in a roasting pan about a third full of water, then bake in your preheated oven for about 45 minutes until the top is set and spongy and it's a nice golden color.

Jethro Tart

MAKES A 12-INCH TART

9oz pine nuts • 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons butter • 1 cup
minus 1 tablespoon sugar • 3 large eggs, preferably
organic • 4 tablespoons Greek fig tree honey, or any
good honey • $\frac{3}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour • a pinch of salt

FOR THE PASTRY

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter • $\frac{2}{3}$ cup powdered sugar • a pinch
of salt • $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups all-purpose flour • 2 egg yolks •
2 tablespoons cold milk or water

You can make the pastry by hand or in a food processor. Cream together the butter, sugar and salt and then rub or pulse in the flour and egg yolks. When the mixture has come together, looking like coarse bread crumbs, add the milk or water. Gently pat together to form a small ball of dough. Wrap and leave to rest for an hour.

Carefully cut thin slices of your pastry (or you can roll out if you prefer) and place in and around the bottom and sides of your 12-inch tart pan. Push the pastry together and level out and tidy up the sides. Cover and leave to rest in the freezer for about 1 hour. Preheat your oven to 350°F, and bake the pastry for around 15 minutes until lightly golden. Reduce the oven temperature to 325°F.

While the pastry is in the oven, toast the pine nuts under the broiler. If you're like me you'll forget about them and they'll burn, so keep your eyes peeled—they don't take long to color. Using a spatula, or a food processor, whip the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Stir in your pine nuts, add the eggs one at a time, then fold in the honey, flour and salt. Spoon into the tart shell and bake for 30–35 minutes.

Great served with caramelized figs (grilled or broiled with a little sugar), crème fraîche and a little lemon thyme.